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ABSTRACT

This document summarizes the information contained in the reports prepared by a number of regions to contribute to a discussion of a forum of European regions examining the place of vocational training in regional development strategies. Information on the place and role of vocational training in their economic development strategies is provided by those regions that receive assistance from European Community financing instruments: Saarland (Federal Republic of Germany), Southern Jutland (Denmark), Limburg (Belgium), Northern England (United Kingdom), Achaea (Greece), Nord-Pas de Calais and Lorraine (France), Liguria (Italy), Andalusia (Spain), region of Southwest Ireland, Northern Holland (Netherlands), and Northern Portugal. Preference is given to those themes that seem to be priorities or to play a strategic role in the policies pursued by the regions or that appear to raise the same type of problems for regional decision makers. Part 1 identifies public authority strategies to help firms and individuals. Part 2 discusses changes in training systems that must accompany these strategies if they are to be effective. Changes both in terms of links with industry and the content, organization, and methods of training are considered. (YLB)

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Regional development and vocational training

Development of human resources in regions of economic reconversion benefiting from Community financial support

European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training

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Regional development and vocational training
Development of human resources
in regions of economic reconversion
benefiting from Community financial support

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GENERAL BACKGROUND

In order to contribute to the discussions of a Forum of European regions examining the place of vocational training in regional development strategies, CEDEFOP commissioned reports from a number of regions receiving assistance from Community financing instruments on the place and role of vocational training in their economic development strategies.

This document summarizes the information contained in the reports prepared for each of the following regions:

Saarland (Federal Republic of Germany), Southern Jutland (Denmark), Limbourg (Belgium), Northern England (United Kingdom), Achaea (Greece), Nord-Pas de Calais and Lorraine (France), Liguria (Italy), Andalucia (Spain), South West Ireland (Ireland), Northern Holland (Netherlands), Northern Portugal (Portugal).
(The last two reports had not been received at the time of preparation of this summary).

The breadth and fullness of these ten reports and the fact that the information given was not always comparable made it difficult to prepare this summary which, in the authors' opinion, often diminishes observations and experiences which were of interest in more than one way.

Since this summary report is intended to provide a starting point for the work of an Inter-regional Forum, it

passes over some of the information in the initial reports (institutional organization, economic and social context, etc.) for two main reasons: a reliable comparative analysis of the regions was impossible since the amount of information given differed too greatly and a concern to avoid over-detailed regional monographs.

Information which we felt to be significant has been incorporated in the body of the report on the basis of its relevance to the main themes examined.

The authors have given preference to those themes which seem to be priorities or to play a strategic role in the policies pursued by the regions or which appear to raise the same type of problems for regional decision-makers.

One of the authors' main concerns was to keep this report as brief and concise as possible to meet the requirements of a summary and to act as a basis for discussion: the aim was not to examine regional policies in detail, but rather to provide those taking part in the Forum with a basis of information for:

- examining a number of common concerns,
- discussing the innovative experiments launched by each of the regions,
- assessing the usefulness of further inter-regional cooperation.

The Forum proceedings will obviously be an indispensable supplement to this report; readers requiring more detailed information should refer back to the regional reports.

INTRODUCTION

Despite major differences in levels of development and production structures (importance of industry, predominance of traditional industry, importance of small and medium-sized enterprises, etc.) in these ten regions, the economic development strategies pursued by regional decision-makers, strategies which to a large extent shape their training policies, have a number of common objectives:

- modernizing the industrial fabric by introducing new technology and also by streamlining company management,
- supporting small and medium-sized enterprise and craft industries,
- encouraging new businesses to start up by building on new opportunities and stimulating the spirit of enterprise,
- encouraging new firms to come to their regions.

With an eye to making the most of their potential, regional decision-makers have laid the stress on indigenous development; schemes to encourage small and medium-sized entreprise and to help people starting up new businesses are obviously of major importance in this context.

Examining these development goals against their regional economic, as well as social and institutional, "contexts" highlights a number of facts which are true of all ten regions:

- The existence of large numbers of unemployed and poorly qualified young people and an adult population lacking the skills needed to cope with the technological changes currently underway who are either unemployed - for periods which are tending to become longer and longer - or threatened with redundancy if they have jobs.

  The outlook for women, although there is hardly any need to point this out, is even bleaker.

- Production structures in many regions are dominated by heavy industries in the throes of major reorganization, or in contrast by large numbers of small industrial or agricultural concerns.

  Although production structures differ greatly in the regions, they have not led to fundamental differences in strategy.

  Leaving aside the special redevelopment scheme for the French regions, particularly Lorraine, the wish to give priority to indigenous development has led regional decision-makers to aim their action at small and medium-sized concerns, since action to assist major concerns is often limited by the fact that these concerns are part of national or international groups, or by the restrictions imposed by national or European policies. This has not, however, prevented the launch of a number of ventures aimed at major concerns.

- Although there are more extensive and higher quality training systems in some regions, no system seems to have good contacts with work realities or to be flexible and able to modify the content and organization of training.

Strategies to help firms and individuals common to all regional decision-makers can be identified from this brief review of the regional context; these strategies must be accompanied by changes in training systems if they are to be effective. Analysis of the implementation of these strategies points to two major obstacles linked, on one hand, to problems in coordinating initiatives and, on the other hand, to shortcomings in the forecasting of training needs; some pilot schemes or new trends in these areas may, however, be pointing the way to solutions.

1. THE MAIN THEMES OF PUBLIC AUTHORITY STRATEGIES

1.1 Strategies to help firms

1.1.1 Background

Training practices in firms, which have an essential role to play in development and optimum human resource management, vary greatly among the various regions, and among firms themselves since larger firms are more likely to have put vocational structures on a more formal footing and are better able to get employees involved in training.

In three regions, firms of a certain size have a statutory duty to allocate a proportion of their wage bill to vocational training schemes; this is particularly true of firms in the French and Irish regions, although methods differ.

- Firms in the Limbourg region seem to be quite exemplary.

  These firms seem to have a dynamic training policy for their employees and organize in-house training on a large scale.

  Their training policy is intended both to provide advanced training and retraining for their employees using training modules which supplement one another and include training in both theory and practice within firms themselves.

Private sector companies are even more concerned than the public sector about the skill level of their employees and appear to have realized that competitiveness and technological renewal are directly linked to continuing training.

Firms in Limbourg seem particularly attentive to training and qualification problems and personnel departments set great store by the concept of the "complete man" and an "overall approach" to work reflected in the establishment of quality "clubs".

- In the Saarland, consular organizations provide their members with considerable assistance.

  The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Saarland has set up a "Productivity and Technology Centre" which provides information and advice and organizes in-company training; the Chamber of Trades has set up a Trades Promotion Centre which provides its members with similar services.

  A similar venture has been launched by the German Trades Union Confederation.

- Similar ventures, on different scales, have been launched in most of the regions by consular or professional organizations or other institutions with similar structures, although the failure of firms, particularly small and medium-sized firms, to provide

training, is stressed in most cases.

It would seem that most employers have so far failed to appreciate the importance of training their employees and in most cases see training as an additional expense and not as an investment.

There are notable exceptions, however, in the major companies, where training is being given a dynamic role within modernization or redevelopment policies.

We have noted that small and medium-sized enterprises are a special target since they are seen as the advance guard of attempts to renew the economic fabric. They are, however, the least sensitive to the advantages of training not just for their employees but for their managers as well.

Various schemes have been launched to make firms more aware of training, to encourage them to make greater efforts in this area and to provide them with advice and assistance as well as schemes to rationalize public assistance in order to make training an integral part of consistent modernization or redevelopment plans.

1.1.2 How the authorities encourage firms

- Campaigns being run by the authorities are designed in the first instance to make firms aware of the advantages of training, to show them where to go for advice on

training and to inform them of the openings available in the training system.

An example of this is the "Adult Training Campaign" in Northern England launched after it became evident that grants for training were not being used. This publicity campaign was run by the Manpower Services Commission (MSC) in an attempt to make firms aware of the benefits of training and to provide them with information on the grants and services available. This campaign was aimed at small firms in particular.

- Action on a larger scale is designed, in all regions - including those regions where firms appear to be more "aware" of training issues - to encourage employers to step up their efforts in the area of training and to back these efforts up.

All labour and manpower agencies, whether national or decentralized to varying extents as well as - when they have sufficient autonomy and a large enough margin of manoeuvre - the services set up by regional authorities, have instituted direct funding procedures for in-company training or systems under which training is made available (such training being given in most cases by manpower agencies or coming under the responsibility of the regional authorities).

Such assistance, whether financial or more technical in nature, is generally intended to back up modernization

measures involving the introduction of new technology and the changes in work organization which this causes and to help with far-reaching streamlining or redevelopment measures. This latter aspect will be dealt with in more detail in the following section from the point of view of retraining for various groups of the population.

The same type of assistance is also given to new firms settling in the region or to existing firms diversifying into new activities.

This is illustrated by the policy of ONEM (National Employment Office) in Limbourg which provides in-company training as well as paying out grants which go some way towards subsidizing the costs of training employees when new businesses are being started up, new technology is being introduced or activities are being expanded or redeveloped. Larger concerns are the main users of this formula, small and medium-sized concerns making use of a system under which unemployed people receiving benefit are seconded to them after attending an advanced training course.

In the Achaea region of Greece, the assistance available to firms from the OAED (Office for Labour Employment) chiefly takes the form of subsidies or help with training when firms set in motion measures to renew equipment or to introduce new production processes.

In an attempt to avoid long-windedness and repetition, we will not list all such types of assistance which are available in all the regions and operate with varying degrees of success - a number of reports noted that firms were failing to make use of this help.

We should like to stress, however, that a common philosophy underlies such assistance, i.e. modernizing the regional industrial fabric with particular emphasis on small and medium-sized concerns for the reasons already discussed above as well as the fact that this type of concern seems to be creating the most new jobs in the regional economic context and the fact, crucial in the dynamics of local development, that these concerns may offer potential for expansion when the know-how of existing employees, who are generally highly skilled, is not just kept up but increased.

There is no getting away from the fact that such assistance, whatever form it may take, is not by itself enough to force firms to make greater efforts to resolve training problems and that there are often major obstacles including the difficulty of pinpointing needs (a matter to which we will return), the lack of availability of employees from these small firms, the inflexible way in which the training on offer is organized (see § 2) and the training of company managers themselves.

We will conclude this section on strategies to help firms

by linking it to other public authority action in the area of technology transfers which has obvious repercussions on training policies.

1.1.3 Rationalizing assistance to firms

Many regions, encouraged by central or decentralized authorities, have launched information campaigns and taken measures to help with technology transfers as part of their inducements to modernize industry.

This is the case in Southern Jutland, for example, where firms benefit from a national technological development programme (measures to increase awareness, financial and technical assistance) and a regional programme implemented via "Technology Information Centres" offering similar services to craft industries and small and medium-sized firms.

The authorities in almost all the regions are taking measures, whether formal or informal, to rally higher education establishments. Since this is likely to have major effects on training, it is interesting to note that the spread of this trend is having major repercussions on the way in which assistance is administered in regions where procedures are highly structured and are centred on the compulsory funding of vocational training by firms. This is is the case in Ireland and in the French regions.

- The AnCo/IDA scheme in Ireland:

Irish firms of a certain size in "designated" sectors of industry have to pay part of their wage bill, the so-called "levy", to AnCo (The Industrial Training Authority), up to 90% of which is repaid in the form of a grant if the training which they wish to initiate meets the criteria laid down by AnCo.

In parallel, IDA (Industrial Development Authority) is also helping firms with their training policies by a system of grants and exemptions.

The "levy/grant" system administered by AnCo has made it possible to increase in-company training substantially. The co-existence of these two schemes has led these agencies, one coming under the Ministry of Labour and the other under the Ministry of Industry, to forge close cooperation links in an attempt to integrate company training policies within consistent, overall development strategies, the main concern of IDA, aimed in particular at the introduction and development of new technology.

- In a similar way, French regions which also have to pay a compulsory levy in certain circumstances, have recently benefited from a special procedure under which they may claim subsidies from the State or the Regional Authorities to increase the funds which they have to set aside for training - the so-called "Commitment to Develop Training".

This procedure, in addition to the advantages which it

offers to firms, enables the authorities to make sure that the training schemes planned by firms are in line with their medium-term development goals and in particular with modernization or streamlining measures already underway.

The need for coordination of the various types of assistance given to firms, whether in the form of advice, technical assistance or help with investment or training, is becoming increasingly acute now that the public policies being pursued are part of overall development strategies.

1.2 **Strategies to help individuals**

Meeting the training needs of their human resources is a major challenge now facing all the regions. Young people leaving school with no qualifications who are finding jobs increasingly difficult to obtain, workers with few skills in jobs which are under threat or who are unemployed for longer and longer periods and workers whose skills are becoming redundant as a result of rapid technological change are all coming on to a labour market with increasingly little prospect of absorbing them.

The strategies being pursued in the regions to deal with these very severe problems have two major aims: to increase the overall standard of training and provide people with a broader range of skills and to play some part in changing attitudes by developing the spirit of enterprise.

There are a number of reasons for priority action of this type:

- employment prospects in existing firms are declining and their needs are difficult to forecast;
- people must be provided with a broader and less specialized range of skills backed up by a good level of general education so that they find it easier to adapt to jobs which are constantly changing;
- regions must be able to offer a capital of human resources likely to attract firms from outside;
- since net job creation is tending to fall off, inducements to start up new businesses or become self-employed must be accompanied by training in entrepreneurial skills.

Attempts to achieve these objectives have led to the creation of a number of schemes which we will examine in outline, before looking at other schemes aimed more specifically at guidance, work experience and retraining for human resources.

1.2.1. Raising educational standards and changing attitudes

A priority in some regions is to provide training for greater numbers of people; such regions are trying to make better use of their existing structures or are investing in new infrastructure and equipment.

All the regions point out that the content of training is

out of step with the general level of their inhabitants and the new requirements of the labour market; in order to combat these shortcomings a number of new measures have been taken in both basic education and continuing training.

1.2.1.1 Reforms of basic education

- **Prolonging basic education**

Without embarking on a description of each of the nine basic education systems, it can be readily seen that short cycles of secondary education are decreasing in favour of long cycles; the authorities have gone out of their way to encourage this trend via a number of measures: converting educational sections, initiating supplementary training to provide a "bridge" between short and long cycles and creating educational options.

Increasing the intake capacity of higher education, a factor vital for regional development due to the high demand at this level and the fact that such establishments are likely to attract firms from outside as well as the managers which regional industry needs, is a problem which seems more difficult to resolve at regional level, even by authorities to which powers have been decentralized or devolved.

Although prolonging basic education is obviously an attempt to raise educational standards it is also

intended to keep a number of young people off the labour market.

- **Revamping technical education and bridging the gap between general and technical education**

Families and the educational system itself are the targets of two-tier action designed to give a new image to education with a technical emphasis, in particular education centred on the new technologies, and to step up the amount of general education within such courses.

The concern underlying this trend is to provide young people with a broader range of skills and at the same time with a speciality.

Conversely, the inclusion of technical subjects in general education is designed to narrow the gaps between educational streams making it easier to move from one stream to another.

- **Expanding alternance training in basic education**

Most authorities, largely central authorities in the field of basic education, have in recent years undertaken reforms to renew their educational systems.

In addition to the measures discussed above, the reforms set in motion have given priority to schemes such as apprenticeship by measures to make apprenticeship

schemes longer, improve the links between practice and theory, give theory a more important role, raise the standards reached at the end of schemes and validate courses by diplomas when these do not exist, etc.

The problem of placing apprentices with an employer is becoming increasingly acute in almost all the regions.

The authorities are therefore launching massive information campaigns targeted at potential employers, giving local authorities the chance to take on apprentices and offering inducements in the form of grants or tax concessions.

In some cases it has been necessary to inform and raise the awareness of young people and their families to counteract the low quality image surrounding apprenticeship in a number of regions.

Alternance training has also been introduced into other basic education courses, for example commercial and technical colleges in Jutland where, after a year of academic secondary education, young people can spend a year as apprentices and then go on to supplementary or advanced training.

- Attempts are also being made to update the content of training and to design courses with a higher vocational content based on the needs of industry, but which do not neglect standards of general education; the Ministries of Education of almost all the regions have for this reason introduced technical or vocational school leaving certificates.

  We shall return to these attempts to link training more closely with industry in Part II which looks at the ways in which training systems must be changed.

All these measures cater for students still at school; the problems facing young school-leavers with no qualifications are more critical. A number of measures have been introduced to help these young people either by bringing them back into the educational system or offering them places on special work experience programmes.

1.2.1.2 Special programmes for young people

Exceptional training schemes aimed at young people, financed both from national funds (public funds or funds from employers, particularly in France) and from regional or European funds, have been set up in all the regions. Although these schemes are often intended to be short-term at the outset, with basic education taking up the baton, they are undoubtedly tending to continue for longer periods.

- **Programmes introduced by labour and manpower agencies**

In Ireland, the Industrial Training Authority (AnCO) runs and supervises schemes for young school leavers. Apprenticeship schemes are also run in this framework: following a year of full-time training in an AnCO centre, young people are placed in firms or released from work to follow technical instruction courses during the first few years of their employment.

Although this scheme appears to be similar to the type of apprenticeship organised as part of basic education in other countries, the Irish system is in fact quite different since training is not recognized by the award of a diploma, there are no standard national programmes and employers often tend to see the value of training in terms of length and not the actual standard of training.

The Irish government is currently attempting to reform this system which provides apprentices with little incentive to attend training courses.

AnCO also offers training at its own centres or at approved centres chiefly for the under-25s.

Young people of low aptitude may attend "induction" courses which provide basic manual training as well as a "knowledge of general work practice"; "main" courses of a higher standard offer training in industrial skills and achieve a very satisfactory placement rate.

After completing induction courses trainees can go on to main courses, although the skills taught at the various centres are decided at national level and do not, therefore, reflect specific regional situations.

The basic vocational training system set up in the Saarland includes a full-time year of induction in a specific vocational field, followed either by a year of alternance training or a year of preparatory vocational training at a school if young people have been unable to find a place on a work experience scheme.

Trainee shortcomings have forced basic education to make the most of new possibilities.

In Southern Jutland, young people between 16 and 19 may take part in the "tactical plan for youth training" worked out by vocational colleges, lycées, communes, labour market representatives, the labour office and the County authorities; this plan aims to offer places on training schemes to all young people, to reduce the distances which trainees have to travel to training centres and to offer training in line with economic development prospects, without neglecting general education.

In the Achaea region, training offered by the Ministry of Labour's manpower employment agency takes the form of one-year accelerated training courses and three-year apprenticeship schemes for young people aged between 15 and 18.

In the French regions, job and skill training schemes for young people aged between 16 and 25 are gradually being replaced by alternance training schemes funded by employers often with supplementary funds from the regional authorities.

Programmes for young people leaving school prematurely have been greatly extended by Andalucia's National Employment Institute (INEM) and supplementary training is being offered particularly under an agreement with the Andalucian government.

In Northern England, the "Youth Training Scheme" run by local manpower boards is a form of apprenticeship in firms or other institutions if firms are unable to offer enough places for trainees, which is the case in this region.

In regions with few employment prospects the content of the two years of training is strongly geared towards the "spirit of enterprise".

Considerable powers over education give local authorities a major role to play in this scheme. The programme seems, however, to be geared more towards national priorities, even though it has been set up and is administered at regional level.

1.2.2 **Special schemes**

Attempts to resolve three of the main problems facing young people and adults, over and above the problem of training, i.e guidance, work experience and retraining, have led to a number of schemes for these groups.

1.2.2.1 Guidance schemes

In Greece the OEAD runs a vocational guidance centre for young people leaving school prematurely or at the end of compulsory schooling.

In addition to information and guidance services and help with placement, the OEAD has worked out a dynamic vocational guidance programme for young people between 15 and 18 who have attended school for a minumum of 6 years.

This programme, lasting 200 hours, is intended to encourage young people to take part in apprenticeship schemes or to attend the accelerated training offered by the OAED and to familiarize young people with the work environment.

The pilot in-depth guidance schemes being run in the French regions have the same objective, i.e. to help young people to work out career plans and, if necessary, to make use of existing resources to design training schemes for them.

Guidance of this type is chiefly given by the structures set up under the 1982 measures, particularly the reception, information and guidance offices and the local missions which rally all those involved in training at local level as well as industry and commerce and local authorities.

Information and guidance centres have also been set up in Andalucia by INEM, although these do not seem to operate very successfully.

Similar ventures have been launched in most regions and operate with varying degrees of success.

Pilot review and assessment centres are being run in the French regions primarily for long-term jobseekers, a major concern in all the regions.

1.2.2.2 Work experience schemes

Developing alternance training schemes to provide young people with work experience during training was not, as we have seen, without problems, although these were to some extent circumvented by rallying the public authorities (the creation of "workshop-schools" in Northern England) or by offering grants to host firms.

Both young people and the long-term unemployed are faced with worse problems at the end of training; regions are offering inducements to firms (grants, exemption from

social security contributions, etc.) to encourage them to employ young people.

In Andalucia, INEM has formulated various temporary employment contracts under which trainees may be placed during or after training. Agreements have been reached with firms with the dual aim of placing young unemployed people in temporary jobs and providing firms with more flexible ways of managing personnel to allow them to concentrate on any redevelopment measures which may be necessary.

Under the "intermediary firm" formula in France associations can employ young people having particular problems in finding a job.

In Ireland, the Labour Department has set up a Youth Employment Agency whose task is to ensure a consistent, coordinated and concerted approach to the problem of youth employment and to promote any measures likely to facilitate their integration.

Firms are being offered a number of incentives to give priority to the employment of the long-term unemployed when they finish training schemes; such schemes are generally intended to keep up their skills, provide them with advanced training or retraining and keep them in contact with the work environment.

Some regions have launched or encouraged association or

local authority initiatives under which these skilled workers are seconded to small and medium-sized firms to help them with modernization, redevelopment or streamlining of management.

1.2.2.3 Retraining schemes

Although workers made redundant as a result of redevelopment measures generally receive help from national labour departments, such help is usually forthcoming only outside of firms after workers have been made redundant.

In some regions special schemes have, however, been launched to assist employees made redundant after the redevelopment of major concerns; this has been the case in the French regions particularly in the nationalized iron and steel industry in Lorraine.

- **The redevelopment scheme for iron and steel concerns in Lorraine**

  The General Convention on Social Protection signed in July 1984 by three union organizations and iron and steel employers included a number of measures relating specifically to training:
  - age measures (early retirement),
  - measures within iron and steel concerns,
  - in-house vocational training,
  - training/redeployment contracts (CFC).

Under these training/redeployment contracts iron and steel workers may attend those training courses most likely to lead to a job for a maximum of two years. During or at the end of the training/redeployment contract, the firm must offer the worker at least two job vacancies.

Candidates for the training/redeployment contract may opt either for a training formula or a capitalization formula under which they receive the amount of salary which they would have received during training.

The capitalization formula is possible only if the worker has a viable self-employment project (assessed by iron and steel diversification companies) or if there is an immediate job opening.

This scheme is run by two companies set up to redevelop the iron and steel industry (SODINOR and SOLODEV), a "redevelopment centre" team answerable to the Prefect responsible for industrial redevelopment and "retraining units" set up by firms called upon to administer training/redeployment contracts.

These various partners are responsible for the personal counselling of iron and steel workers on training/ redeployment contracts, offering guidance on the training schemes which are most likely to lead to a new job and following up business start-up projects.

This special scheme is accompanied by a general retraining programme which aims to redeploy training schemes around certain strategic skills (technicians and superintendents, maintenance, sales).

Firms have been rallied to assist with these measures and also help to set up training schemes and to make their employees more aware of the need for training and retraining.

- **Other schemes**

There is a similar, but less extensive, scheme (no delegated Prefect or special agreement) in the Nord-Pas de Calais region: retraining teams and retraining leave give workers threatened with redundancy the chance of personal counselling on their training plans and job finding strategies.

In Andalucia, INEM helps redeveloping firms to organize training for their employees, but the system seems to be dogged by a lack of experience, particularly as regards the coordination of public authority action with the regional labour market situation.

Job prospects in existing firms or in firms which the authorities are attempting to attract to their areas by various incentives, particularly the existence of a skilled workforce, seem far from adequate to absorb the available workforce. The regions are therefore running a

number of schemes intended to encourage their inhabitants to start up new businesses or to become self-employed.

1.2.3 **Developing the spirit of enterprise**

Major attempts are being made to breathe life into job creation ventures among young and not so young jobseekers in the regions. Measures include adapting the content of training and setting up structures to provide job creators with help and advice as well as production infrastructure or services for people starting up new businesses intended to help them assess the viability of their projects and to get these projects off the ground.

Action by the public authorities in this area is generally intended to make the training on offer reflect this concern in its programmes and to offer active support to associations which bring together all those involved in the local economy and local authorities. Grants or funds are also being made available to people starting up new businesses or candidates for self-employment.

Various incentives are also being offered to encourage "new" types of enterprise: cooperatives, community businesses, etc.

The training system is being urged to incorporate this "enterprise culture" into its programmes and also to become more "aware" of the changes underway in industry and working practices and not just to offer conventional

vocational skill training.

Following on from this, Part II will now look at the impact of public authority strategies to help firms and individuals on the training available.

2. HOW TRAINING SYSTEMS MUST CHANGE

Stepping up the amount of training given in firms, particularly small and medium-sized firms, offering individuals, especially those with a low standard of education, training which meets their needs and changing attitudes to develop the enterprise culture requires major changes on the part of those offering training both in terms of their links with industry and the content, organization and methods of the training on offer.

2.1. Links with industry and the content of training

All the regions are attempting to start dynamic processes in training establishments to bring educational systems into the real world and ensure that the training on offer is in line with the needs of individuals and firms.

2.1.1 Bringing training systems into contact with their environment

All the regions complain, although to differing extents, about the lack of contact between training and industry. This attitude has far-reaching and unfortunate effects, particularly in basic education, where young people leave school with practically no knowledge of work and industry.

Education and labour management authorities have launched a number of initiatives in an attempt to remedy this situation.

In Northern England, for example, the pilot "Training and Vocational Education Initiative" (TVEI) which the Manpower Services Commission has launched in several schools takes the form of visits to firms and lectures by employers and trade unionists, etc. The scheme was extended to other Local Education Authorities in September 1986 and seems set to have a considerable impact on course contents and teachers' and students' attitudes.

In France, the "school-firm twinning" formula is very successful and has met with a very favourable reaction from employers and teaching staff.

In Andalucia, an agreement between the Councils of Education, Science, Labour and Social Security of the Andalucian Community and the Confederation of Andalucian Industry aims, on one hand, to make it easier for firms to take on trainees and, on the other hand, to improve links between the basic vocational training system (FPR) and its environment.

Similar ventures launched in other regions now seem to be coming to fruition.

2.1.2 Changing the content of training

Regions with a strong tradition of industry pointed out that their industrial structures had a major impact on the training available. Some regions "suspect" that training systems are failing to question the training which they

offer and are adopting a routine attitude even though the urgency of the situation requires rapid change if training is to be brought into line with the new economic context. In general, regions want:

- training of a higher general standard providing a broader range of skills,
- training in the new technologies,
- training in the skills needed to start up in business or become self-employed.

There is less criticism of training systems in the Limbourg region where it is felt that the system is undergoing continual change and renewal, although there is some criticism of the slowness of such change.

In the Saarland there is also relative satisfaction with the content of training and its ability to meet economic development trends and the needs of firms. It is also felt that universities and higher technical colleges are making a sizeable contribution to training in the skills needed to start up new businesses and to assistance in the area of technology transfer training. Past traditions of cooperation between education and industry may be at the root of such attitudes.

In the Achaea region it is felt, in contrast, that training programmes are not based on studies of the production system and are consequently too strongly geared towards "basic" trades, particularly in initial education; continuing training seems more in line with production

needs due to its closer links with industry. The Ministry of Education has therefore taken steps to encourage the introduction of technology courses into primary education, the use of new technology in secondary education and specialised teaching in cooperation with public and private enterprise and labour departments.

In Ireland, an Economic and Social Council report stresses that a number of skills are emerging in Irish industry and commerce, particularly in the technician area.

In many instances these skills could be incorporated into the training given under the apprenticeship system. It seems however that there is a tendency to consciously circumvent the system, since a growing number of people are acquiring these skills without receiving any official recognition of their expertise.

In Andalucia, common core syllabi have been included in technical education in order to provide a broader range of knowledge; the programmes of INEM centres are updated using information received from expert analysts of the Institute who have close links with firms.

In Northern England, universities are helping to design training programmes (starting up in business, new technology, etc.) which are then offered by training establishments.

In Lorraine, a regional training programme has been

prepared in order to bring the training available more into line with the needs of firms and the development priorities laid down by the Regional Council.

In the Nord-Pas de Calais, there are high hopes that the use of tender procedures will obtain the best possible response from training establishments to regional authority guidelines on vocational training.

The variety of procedures in use shows how far-reaching research by the various authorities has been, whether or not they are decentralized, and how important they feel this problem to be.

Finally, professional and union organizations are being brought in on training problems in all the regions, chiefly in an attempt to discover their opinion on the existing content of training and the changes which they would like to see.

Increasingly urgent appeals are being made to the consultative committees working both in basic education and continuing training in this respect. Two very different sets of problems which are equally difficult to solve are being raised here; in the first instance problems linked to the ability of professional organizations to identify and forecast their needs, a problem to which we will return in the conclusion, and problems connected with the representative nature of their members who are often appointed for their prestige value

rather than their technical expertise.

2.2 Organization and methods of training

The way in which training is organized is one of the main obstacles to training in small and medium-sized enterprise since it raises problems of staff time availability.

The training of large numbers of people with a low standard of education is a major challenge now facing regions.

Regional authorities are therefore encouraging training organizations to change the way in which training is organized and the methods used; this can be achieved only if training schemes are provided for trainers themselves.

2.2.1 Changing the organization and methods of training

Training agencies in all the regions are being encouraged to design modular systems of training to improve the way in which training is organized.

There are several advantages to training organized in this way: modules can be "assembled" to construct genuine courses, or even training options which are flexible enough to meet the needs of firms (a further advantage of flexible schemes of this type is that "made-to-measure" training can be offered to firms who may choose the content and length of training which meets their

particular needs) and the needs of individuals who do not always have sufficient time available to take part in formal training and can, under this system, work out "training menus" which satisfy their personal objectives.

In France, the development on a large scale of credits which may be built up and which are recognized by Ministry of Education diplomas has shown the advantages of this type of organization.

In this discussion of the organization of training, we feel that we should mention the schemes underway to improve the distribution of training in regions and make it accessible to the majority, particularly in rural areas. Better geographical distribution of training is obviously a necessity if low standards of education are to be raised.

Organizational aspects also include the inducements offered to training organizations to regroup to fit specific needs, so that the most profitable use can be made of equipment and trainers given the chance to compare and enhance their experience. Finally, in Denmark training schemes can be set up at the request of sufficient numbers of people in the field of their choice under the "leisure education" system.

Along the same lines, "open training" is offered by Colleges of Further Education in Great Britain which give many technical or general training courses outside working

hours. The national and local authorities have more recently joined forces to set up ITECs (Information Technology Centres) open to young people and adults who want training in the new technologies.

Our discussion has been limited to new and significant ways of organizing training which seem to meet the objectives of the strategies being pursued in the regions. All the regions, however, want training to be organized in more flexible ways in terms of time or distribution.

Massive numbers of young people and adults with a low standard of education are, as we have already stressed, a genuine challenge to the public authorities given the cost and ponderousness of "conventional" training methods.

Research into innovative teaching methods is therefore a key factor in regional policy, both to meet this challenge head on and to provide employees of small and medium-sized firms with improved access to and to make them more aware of training.

The new communication technologies seem to be playing a major role in the achievement of these objectives. Training institutions throughout the regions are being encouraged to use these technologies:

- testing of software for training in the new technologies in Liguria,
- computer assisted learning in schools and in continuing

training organizations for firms, especially small and medium-sized firms, and individuals.

Two experiments which seem to be of particular interest in this area are examined below.

In the Nord-Pas de Calais, the Regional Council, together with the State and the Carrefour International de la Communication, has designed a computer assisted learning system called LUCIL to help people with reading problems; several thousand people are currently using this system.

In the Limbourg region, the Ministry of Education has a five-year plan for the introduction of computer assisted learning into the educational system with, and this is of particular interest, back-up from banks, professional organizations, research institutes and private enterprise.

The expansion of cable television networks is offering interesting prospects in the area of audiovisual techniques, particularly in the French regions, where a wide range of educational programmes could be broadcast to firms and homes.

Audiovisual techniques were also used in the Limbourg region in 1978 to set up a "Modern Educational Materials Centre" whose aim is to improve the use of audiovisual techniques in teaching and which offers courses for the staff of educational establishments.

All the regions currently attempting to optimize the use of communication technologies for training purposes feel that new ways of training their trainers will have to be found if there is to be a more widespread use of these technologies.

2.2.2 Training of trainers

Educational policies in all the regions give key status to the training of their trainers in both basic education and continuing training. Our discussion in this section will centre on the actual training of teaching staff and will also look at initiatives to give trainers better links with industry which can be seen as part of their training.

In the Limbourg region, in addition to the centre for advanced training in the use of audiovisual techniques discussed above, national schemes are being run to upgrade teaching staff both in respect of the content of their teaching and the methods which they use.

The two main agencies pursuing this policy are ONEM's National Centre for Training and Educational Research, for trainers in the continuing training system, and the Ministry of Education.

Steps are currently being taken to decentralize the implementation of this policy or to supplement it by regional schemes. Policies aimed at firms are also being pursued by training directors within firms themselves or

by external organizations.

In the Achaea region, refresher seminars are organised for trainers and teachers from all training institutions answerable to the Manpower Office on topics such as modern educational theory, new teaching methods, new expertise and new programmes.

In the French regions, universities and higher education institutions are being urged to design advanced training programmes for the staff of training organizations.

Specific funds are also available under special programmes either from the Ministry of Education (Academic Mission for the Training of Trainers in the Nord-Pas de Calais) or from the decentralized authorities in the case of the continuing training system. Continuing training organizations seem, however, to pay little attention to this problem and any efforts which they make in this area are designed to improve their chances of being selected to run approved training schemes.

The most far-reaching efforts seem to be taking place in Andalucia which has a clear-cut policy in this area.

INEM (the National Employment Institute) has a network of its own and other associated centres; INEM's policy is to recruit professional trainers with teaching qualifications and trainers from industry who are either experts "enticed away" from firms by INEM officials or jobseekers.

The technical expertise of the first group is constantly updated at specialised INEM centres and the second group receives training in teaching theory which is also continually updated. This teacher training is also offered to in-company trainers.

This type of interaction between trainers, experts and in-company trainers seems to be very rewarding for those involved, contributes to exchanges between education and industry and cannot but be a source of renewal both in terms of content and training methods and organization.

In the Limbourg region, there are also informal exchanges between firms and trainers although these are more limited and take the form of contacts or seminars rather than actual advanced training.

Ventures of this type are being encouraged by all public authorities as part of their drive to improve the links between education and industry.

We should like to stress a point which we made in the interim report, i.e. the lack of information in the regional reports on the question of the training of trainers, particularly trainers in the continuing training system, may be due to the often thorny problem of their status.

Further training to upgrade the skills of the protagonists of vocational training, i.e. the trainers, who are one of

the major lines of transmission of public authority and company policies, seems, however, to be a necessity.

Training organizations also have some experience in identifying the training needs of companies and the most appropriate methods for specific target groups or firms due to the close links which they have with these.

Expanding and building on this expertise could play a useful part in solving one of the two problems examined in our conclusion, i.e. the problem of identifying training needs.

CONCLUSIONS

Development strategies being pursued by public authorities in the regions have a number of common objectives and use similar resources; they also have a number of weak points in common, i.e. the lack of basic economic forecasting in general and forecasting of vocational training needs in particular, as well as the multiplicity of sources from which initiatives come and the lack or even absence of coordination.

- **Forecasting training needs**

All the regions base or would like to base their training policies on reliable studies showing the paths which they should travel for economic development, whether this takes the form of modernization, redevelopment or the diversification of activities.

Special systems have been set up for this purpose in some regions, but, even in these cases, it is felt that forecasts are unreliable, one of the problems stressed being that of anticipating the way in which needs are likely to develop.

Policies are in most cases shaped by analyses of zones, professional sectors or firms.

Such analyses are conducted in close cooperation with professional organizations on consultative bodies where

there is generally equal representation; thse bodies report back to institutions responsible for economic development and institutions responsible for educational policy.

Such consultation seems, however, to be largely inadequate, since professional organizations themselves find it difficult to pinpoint their development prospects and identify their needs.

Some regions, for example Liguria and the Nord-Pas de Calais, have therefore set up "monitoring units" to monitor employment and skill trends; these units are run by permanent staff and attempt to collate and exploit the information available on the region.

In the Achaea region, the "insight" of training organizations, which analyse needs in an attempt to highlight major trends, is taken as a basis by the authorities.

In Southern Jutland, the authorities use the studies and statistics prepared by the Labour Market Commission and the Regional Research Institute to define objectives and target groups.

Educational authorities in the Limbourg region are helped by the Sub-regional Labour Committee, a consultative body with equal representation coordinated by ONEM which uses,

among other things, the SIMONA computerised data bank on job vacancies and jobseekers.

Finally, in Andalucia, INEM has expert analysts in firms who pass on the needs which they identify to INEM centres.

Despite the range of methods used by regions to solve this problem of forecasting and anticipating training needs, no region appears to be satisfied with the methods currently in use and this seems to be a priority area for action by "development planners", who have also been called upon to solve the problem of coordinating ventures.

- **Coordinating ventures**

Regional economic development in the same way as the preparation and implementation of educational policies involves a multitude of partners: firms, professional and trade union organizations, development companies, associations, basic and continuing training establishments and, of course, the public authorities at their various administrative levels and their satellites (institutes, agencies, offices, etc.), as well as a wide variety of other institutions and structures are all, at their different levels, trying to find a concerted and coordinated approach.

A lack of coordinated decision-making means that the funds for many of these structures come from a range of

unconnected or overlapping sources.

It is not within the scope of this report to look at the decision-making procedures and the role and margin of manoeuvre of regional authorities to which powers have been decentralized to differing extents.

Examination of the regional reports which give a fairly accurate picture of the situation provides a strong incentive to prepare standard information to act as a basis for analysing the impact of regional institutional organization on policy management.

The regional authorities never have full control over all the financial or technical instruments in use in their regions, whether powers have been devolved or completely or partly decentralized to them or placed back in the hands of central government.

Their autonomy also varies in different fields (the economy, regional planning, basic education, continuing training, etc.).

Achieving any degree of consistency with private initiatives designed to meet development objectives which may or may not be supported by the public authorities is made even harder by this confusion of powers over public initiatives.

Some local authorities, aware that this uncoordinated, or even muddled, action prevents schemes from having any effective impact and detracts from the profitable use of public funds, are taking part in schemes to provide a focus for initiatives.

The County of Tyne & Wear in Northern England has joined forces with local industry and associations offering advice and support to people starting up new businesses to set up, with the help of the ESF, the "Tyne & Wear Enterprise Trust" (ENTRUST).

The Trust has created a "business expansion" unit and a training unit which offers training schemes for self-employment as well as training in new products, new production processes, work organization, management, etc.

Training programmes are designed in cooperation with the MSC and Sunderland Polytechnic.

The Trust also runs a scheme under which unemployed engineers and technicians are seconded to small local entreprises for product diversification and production process modernization.

A similar scheme has been run for unemployed women office workers.

ENTRUST provided some 50 000 hours of training in 1985 and

helped 80 small and medium-sized firms.

Some 50 jobseekers seconded in this way have been offered work.

The town of Saarbrücken in the Saarland has rallied all available resources (its own funds, Land and Bundesanstalt für Arbeit (Federal Labour Office) resources, support from educational bodies) to design an integrated programme to promote training and employment (launched under the title "Programme to combat the professional destitution of the town of Saarbrücken").

The programme aims to establish schemes for vocational education, retraining and advanced training as well as schemes to promote employment. Social services, youth agencies, youth protection associations and Protestant associations have all been rallied to take part. The acquisition of a factory for conversion into training workshops has been a major achievement.

Improving the coordination between bodies responsible for manpower at local level has led the Irish Youth Employment Agency to put forward a proposal for the creation of local intermediate agencies (COMTECs) offering young people integrated employment and training programmes, improving the links between employment agencies and giving local authorities a more important role to play in the provision of youth services. Two COMTECs have been set up on a

pilot basis in the South West region.

There has also been an expansion of the integrated development operation procedure involving local and regional authorities - partners in local development - with funds coming from the ESF.

Operations of this type are underway in the Nord-Pas de Calais and Limbourg regions in particular.

These experiences demonstrate that the local level may well be the best level for coordinating initiatives and rallying the many partners involved. It is also at this level and to achieve this precise objective that "development planners" have a decisive role to play.

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